BOOKS lately Printed for W. Rogers.

A Sermon Preached at *White-Hall*, before the Queen, on the Monthly-Faſt-Day, *September* 16th, 1691. 4°

A Perſuaſive to Frequent Communion in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Eighth Edition. 12°

Both by the moſt Reverend Father in God, John *Lord Arch-Biſhop of* Canterbury.

A Sermon Preached on the 28th of *June*, at St. *Andrew's Holbourn*. By the Right Reverend Father in God *John* Lord Biſhop of *Norwich*.

A Sermon Preached on the 28th of *June*, at St. *Mary le Bow*, on *Sunday* the Fifth of *July*, 1691. at the Conſecration of the moſt Reverend Father in God *John* Lord Arch-Biſhop of *York*; and the Right Reverend Fathers in God, *John* Lord Biſhop of *Norwich*, *Richard* Lord Biſhop of *Peterborough*, and *Edward* Lord Biſhop of *Glouceſter*. By *Joſhua Clark*, Chaplain to the Right Reverend Father in God, the Biſhop of *Norwich*. 4°

The Neceſſity of Serious Conſideration, and ſpeedy Repentance, as the only way to be ſafe both living and dying. 8°

The Lambs of Chriſt fed with the ſincere Milk of the Word of God, in a ſhort Scripture-Catechiſm. 12°

The Folly of Atheiſm demonſtrated to the Capacity of the moſt unlearned Reader. 8°

Theſe Three by the Reverend Mr. Clement Elis, *Rector of* Kirby *in* Notinghamſhire.

Reflections upon two Books, one Entituled, *The Caſe of Allegiance to a King in Poſſeſſion*. The other, *An Anſwer to Dr.* Sherlock's *Caſe of Allegiance to Sovereign Powers in Poſſeſſion*: on thoſe parts eſpecially, wherein the Author endeavours to ſhew his Opinion to be agreeable to the Laws of this Land. In a Letter to a Friend. 4°

BOOKS lately Printed for W. Rogers.

A Sermon Preached at *White-Hall*, before the Queen, on the Monthly-Faſt-Day, *September* 16th, 1691. 4°

A Perſuaſive to Frequent Communion in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Eighth Edition. 12°

Both by the moſt Reverend Father in God, John *Lord Arch-Biſhop of* Canterbury.

A Sermon Preached on the 28th of *June*, at St. *Andrew's Holbourn*. By the Right Reverend Father in God *John* Lord Biſhop of *Norwich*.

A Sermon Preached on the 28th of *June*, at St. *Mary le Bow*, on *Sunday* the Fifth of *July*, 1691. at the Conſecration of the moſt Reverend Father in God *John* Lord Arch-Biſhop of *York*; and the Right Reverend Fathers in God, *John* Lord Biſhop of *Norwich*, *Richard* Lord Biſhop of *Peterborough*, and *Edward* Lord Biſhop of *Glouceſter*. By *Joſhua Clark*, Chaplain to the Right Reverend Father in God, the Biſhop of *Norwich*. 4°

The Neceſſity of Serious Conſideration, and ſpeedy Repentance, as the only way to be ſafe both living and dying. 8°

The Lambs of Chriſt fed with the ſincere Milk of the Word of God, in a ſhort Scripture-Catechiſm. 12°

The Folly of Atheiſm demonſtrated to the Capacity of the moſt unlearned Reader. 8°

Theſe Three by the Reverend Mr. Clement Elis, *Rector of* Kirby *in* Notinghamſhire.

Reflections upon two Books, one Entituled, *The Caſe of Allegiance to a King in Poſſeſſion*. The other, *An Anſwer to Dr.* Sherlock's *Caſe of Allegiance to Sovereign Powers in Poſſeſſion*: on thoſe parts eſpecially, wherein the Author endeavours to ſhew his Opinion to be agreeable to the Laws of this Land. In a Letter to a Friend. 4°

The Dean of St. *Paul's's*

SERMON

BEFORE THE

QUEEN,

On the 12*th* of *February*, 169½.

The Dean of St. Paul's

SERMON

PREACH'D THE

QUEEN:

On the 23rd of February, 1695.

A SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN

AT

WHITE-HALL,

February the XIIth, 169½. in Lent

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D.
Dean of St. *Paul's*, Master of the *Temple*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Their MAJESTIES.

Published by Her Majesty's special Command.

LONDON:
Printed for *William Rogers*, at the *Sun* over-against St. *Dunstan's* Church, in *Fleetstreet*. 1692.

A SERMON

Preached before

HER MAJESTY

At *WHITE-HALL*, *Febr.* 12. 169½.

IV. MATT. 1.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.

THE Temptation of our Saviour, after his fasting Forty Days, is a very proper Subject for our Meditation at this time; and suggests so many useful observations, that I shall not waste any time in a needless Preface; but shall 1. Consider in general, what concerns his Temptation; and 2. Explain the Nature of those particular

Temptations wherewith the Devil aſſaulted him.

1. In general, Concerning our Saviour's being tempted by the Devil: Now to tempt, is to make a Tryal and Experiment; and when the Devil tempts, it is to try, if he can perſwade, or ſeduce us from the Fear, and Worſhip, and Obedience of God.

1. Now in the firſt place it is very obſervable, that Chriſt himſelf, when he became Man, was tempted of the Devil; and there is no greater myſtery in this, than that he was liable to hunger and cold, and had all the innocent Appetites, Inclinations, Infirmities of Human nature; that is, That he was a true and real Man. The Ancients generally conclude, that the Devil did not know at this time, how great a Perſon our Saviour was, even the Eternal Son of God; for it is hardly credible, that had he known this, he would have made ſo vain and hopeleſs an attempt on him: It is likely enough, he thought him to be ſome extraordinary perſon; He knew by the Ancient Prophecies, that the *Meſſias* was to appear; and knew from the Prophet *Daniel*, that the time for his coming was accompliſhed; nay, it is probable, he knew all the circumſtances of his Birth, and heard

heard that teſtimony God gave him at his Baptiſm, *This is my beloved Son*; but he ſaw he was a Man, though an extraordinary Man; and might not know that he was any thing more; and having formerly foiled our firſt Parents in Paradiſe, in the State of innocence, hoped for the like ſucceſs again.

Now if Chriſt himſelf was tempted by the Devil, none of us muſt hope to eſcape; tempted we ſhall be, and therefore muſt take care to ſtand upon our guard, and to fortify our Minds againſt all temptations.

And this encouragement we have from the example of our Saviour, that to be tempted is no Sin, unleſs we yield to a temptation; for He was tempted as we are, yet without ſin; and we cannot imagine, had it been a ſin to be tempted, that God would have permitted the Devil to have tempted our Saviour; which may eaſe the fears of ſome Melancholly Chriſtians, who are afflicted with evil and tempting thoughts which their Souls abhor; for whatever the cauſe of ſuch thoughts be, whether a frighted and diſturbed imagination, or the ſuggeſtion of wicked Spirits, they can no more defile the Soul, which abhors and rejects them with grief and indignation, than they can

the

the Paper, on which they are writ.

Nay, hence we learn, that God many times exerciſes thoſe with the greateſt and moſt difficult Tryals and Temptations, who are moſt dear to him. He had no ſooner proclaimed Chriſt his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed, but he leads him by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be tempted of the Devil.

This Life is a State of Tryal and Probation; and Temptations, though they create ſome trouble and difficulty to good men, yet do them no hurt. If good Men Conquer, Temptations do but exerciſe, encreaſe, and confirm their Graces, and make them great and illuſtrious examples to the World, glorify the Divine Power in the Victories and Triumphs of his Servants, over the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil; give them a ſecure hope in God, and a tranſporting ſenſe of his Love, and prepare great rewards for them in the next Life. And if they happen in any particular encounter to be overcome, as St. *Peter* himſelf was, when he denied his Maſter; yet they riſe again with glory, and the ſenſe of their ſin, and the ſhame of a defeat, fills them with ſorrow, indignation, ſelf-revenge, gives them new ſpirit, vigour, activity, reſolution, makes them more patient of hardſhips and ſufferings,

ferings, more unwearied in doing good, more humble and modeſt, and more perfectly reſigned to the Will of God, to diſpoſe of them and their Services to his own Glory, as he pleaſes.

God does not train up thoſe whom he Loves, and whom he prepares for Glory, in eaſe and ſoftneſs; *Whom the Lord loveth he chaſtneth; and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth*: And the more difficult Temptations he expoſes us to, the greater honour he does us; the more glorious will our Triumphs, the richer and brighter will our Crowns be. Let us then behold our Saviour in the Wilderneſs, ſeparated from human converſation, and all the comforts of Life, in the midſt of wild Beaſts and tempting Spirits, and not think, that God uſes us hardly, if at any time he lets looſe the Tempter upon us, and gives him power over all we have, as he did in the Caſe of *Job*, to afflict us in our Relations, our Bodies, our Eſtates, good Names, or whatever gives us the ſharpeſt and keeneſt ſenſe of ſuffering; and is the moſt difficult exerciſe of our Faith.

2. Let us conſider the time, when our Saviour was tempted, *viz.* immediately after his Baptiſm, *being full of the Holy Ghoſt*, 4. Luke. 1.

1. As ſoon as our Saviour was baptized, he was led by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs. For *Then* in my Text relates to the time of his Baptiſm; and St. *Luke* tells us, this was done in his return from *Jordan*, where he was baptized by *John*.

By this Religious Rite, our Saviour had devoted himſelf to the immediate ſervice of God in the Salvation of Mankind, and was inaugurated into his Prophetick Office, by that Teſtimony which was given to him by a Voice from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed*; and this was the Critical time, both for the Devil to tempt, and for our Saviour to baffle all his temptations, and to triumph over him.

Could the Devil have conquered our Saviour in this firſt aſſault, there had been an end of this Glorions deſign of mans Salvation, when he had enſlaved and captivated the Saviour himſelf; and therefore he began as early with the ſecond *Adam*, as he did with the firſt, though not with the like ſucceſs. Had our firſt Parents reſiſted the firſt temptation, we had been happy for ever; but they yielded and brought death upon themſelves and their Poſterity; but the ſeed of the Woman, whom God had promiſed, ſhould break the Serpents Head, who *was made manifeſt*

manifeſt to deſtroy the works, the Kingdom and the Power *of the Devil*, by God's order and appointment, firſt encounters him in his own perſon, reſiſts his moſt furious aſſaults, makes him retreat with ſhame and deſpair, as foreſeeing his own deſtiny, and the final deſtruction of his Kingdom. As the old Serpent ſeduced our firſt Parents in Paradice, and brought ſin and miſery, and death into the world, ſo it was very fitting that the Saviour of Mankind ſhould give the firſt proof of his Divine Power in conquering the Tempter.

This gives us great encouragement to fight under Chriſt's Banners againſt the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil; for the Captain of our Salvation has already conquered, and if we are not wanting to our ſelves, we *ſhall be more than Conquerors through Chriſt who ſtrengthens us.*

He knows what the power of temptations is, and what meaſures of Grace are neceſſary to reſiſt them; and if we do not forſake him, he will not forſake us. He has conquered himſelf, and knows how to conquer; and if we faithfully adhere to him, we ſhall conquer too.

Nay, in caſe we ſhould ſome time be conquered, this has made him *a merciful and compaſſionate High Prieſt, being in all things tempted like*

as we are: He knows the weakneſs of humane nature, and the power and ſubtilty of the Tempter, and prays for us, as he did for St. *Peter*, *That our faith fail not*; that if we fall, we may riſe again by Repentance: And this is a mighty Conſolation, *That if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous*, who is not only a Propitiation for our Sins, but was tempted alſo, as we are.

2*ly*. St. *Luke* obſerves, that our Saviour was *full of the Holy Ghoſt*, (which he received without meaſure at his Baptiſm, when the Holy Ghoſt deſcended like a Dove, and reſted on him) before he was led by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs to be tempted of the Devil.

For Human Nature (and it was the Human Nature of Chriſt on which the Holy Ghoſt deſcended) cannot reſiſt ſuch powerful Aſſaults without Divine Aſſiſtances. And the Example of our Saviour aſſures us, that God will not expoſe us to any Temptations, without giving us proportionable meaſures of Grace to reſiſt them: That if we are at any time conquered, it is not for want of power, but for want of will to conquer: that is, the fault is wholly our own, and we cannot blame God for it.

I doubt, there are few men in the World, but the

the Devil (had he the full power of tempting) could find out ſome Temptations too big for them; but the Divine Goodneſs is ſeen, as well in reſtraining the power of the Devil, that we ſhall not be tempted above what we are able to bear, as by the ſtrengthning our minds by the internal Aſſiſtances of his Grace; and therefore our Saviour has taught us to pray, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*, ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, from the wicked One, which does not ſignify, that we may never be tempted, which is impoſſible, while we live in Bodies of Fleſh and Blood, and are incompaſſed with all the Flattering Objects of Fleſh and Senſe; but that God would not give us up into the power of the Devil, to be tempted above what we are able.

Some of the Ancients obſerve from this Story, That when we devote and conſecrate our ſelves to God, we muſt expect to be tempted as our Saviour was: As for bad men, who are the Slaves and Vaſſals of the Devil, he cannot ſo properly be ſaid to tempt, as to govern them; for *he is the Spirit that worketh in the Children of diſobedience*: but when men deſert his Service, he is very buſie to recover his Slaves again; but then our comfort and ſecurity too, is, That when

when we give up our ſelves to the Service of God, he takes us into his protection; the wicked One cannot touch us without his leave, and he always proportions our Trials to our Strength.

3*dly*, Conſider the Place of our Saviour's Temptation: *He was led by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs*, where there were no tempting Objects, but yet there the temping Spirit found him.

Some men think, that the ſureſt way to get rid of Temptations, is to get out of the World; to withdraw themſelves from Human Converſation; or to make a ſhew of doing it, without doing it; as if the Devil could not follow them into a Deſert, or a Cell. While we live in Bodies of Fleſh and Blood, we may be tempted where-ever we are: If we mortify our Senſual Appetites, and our love to this World, we may live very innocently in the World; if we do not, we can never get rid of the World, but where-ever we go, we carry it in our hearts.

Do theſe men imagine, they can never be tempted to luſt, unleſs they daily ſee and converſe with beautiful Women? or that they cannot love the World without living in a Court, and enjoying

joying all the eaſe and luxury of a plentiful Fortune? or that it is not poſſible to deſpiſe the World with as much haughtineſs and vanity of mind, as any Man has, who moſt admires it? That a Monk can't be as proud as an Emperor, and glory as much in a ſullen Retirement, in Voluntary Auſterities, in an Affected Poverty, in a Vain Opinion of extraordinary Sanctity, as any Man can do in Wealth and Power? Whence came all thoſe Superſtitions, which have corrupted both the Faith and Worſhip of Chriſtianity, and done more miſchief to the Church and Religion, than all the looſeneſs of a Secular Life, but from Deſarts and the Cells of Monks and Hermites? Which proves that the Devil has his Temptations for the Wilderneſs, as well as for the Court; for the moſt Religious Devotees, and Melancholly Enthuſiaſts, as well as for the Men of this World; and thoſe the moſt dangerous Temptations too; which as experience tells us, open a back-door for Pride and Ambition, and Secular Power, and a general corruption of Manners to enter into the Church, and into the Lives of Chriſtians: And therefore we muſt guard our ſelves againſt the Tempter as well in our greateſt ſolitudes and retirements from the

the World, as in a croud of buſineſs. We muſt have a care of the temptations of Devotion, and Mortification, of Faſtings and Penances, of a ſullen diſcontent at this World, as well as of the temptations of a buſie Life, and of an eaſie and proſperous Fortune.

4*thly*, I obſerve, That Chriſt *was led by the Spirit into the Wilderneſs*, to be tempted of the Devil; that is, It was God's appointment, not his own voluntary choice. And this Teaches us manfully to reſiſt Temptations, when the Providence of God, and the unavoidable circumſtances of our Condition bring us into Temptations, but not preſumptuouſly to thruſt our ſelves into them.

There is always danger in Temptations, eſpecially when we raſhly venture upon them. *Let not him that putteth on his Armour, boaſt, as he that putteth it off*, is true in our Spiritual Warfare. We have ſeen great Men conquered, even St. *Peter* himſelf; and therefore *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall*, and not unneceſſarily venture too near a Precipice, where he may be in danger of falling.

Our

Our Saviour has taught us to pray, that God would not lead us into Temptation, as I obſerved before; much leſs then ought we to lead our ſelves into Temptation. We may eaſily preſume too far upon the Strength of our Faith, our Courage, our Reſolution, as St. *Peter* did, who had he been more diffident of himſelf, had kept out of the High-Prieſt's Hall, and eſcaped the Temptation, which he could not reſiſt.

We daily ſee, that Men who preſume upon the Strength of their Conſtitution, and uſe their Bodies ill, deſtroy their Health, and ſhorten their Lives, while Men who feel their own weak and crazy Temper, live on with Care to a good Old Age; and thus it is with reſpect to the Mind, as well as to the Body: Preſumption will deſtroy thoſe, whom Fear and Caution will ſecure; and therefore, *let us not be high-minded, but fear.*

There are a great many ways, whereby Men expoſe themſelves to Temptation, and tempt even the Tempter; ſome of which are very obvious: As to keep Ill Company, whoſe Converſation is a daily Temptation: Sloth and Idleneſs, which betrays Men to any Wickedneſs, which offers itſelf: For it is an uneaſie thing to have nothing to do, and that itſelf is a Tem-

ptation, and the Devil never wants Buſineſs to employ ſuch Men in; and I know nothing worſe than this, but when Men chooſe ſuch Buſineſs, as is nothing elſe but Idleneſs and Vanity, or can only miniſter to their own, or to other Mens Luſts.

But there are other ways, whereby Men thruſt themſelves into Temptations, without conſidering what they do. I might name many, but ſhall content myſelf with ſome few at preſent, which are leaſt obſerved, and which prove Snares to good Men; as for inſtance: To impoſe upon our ſelves conſtant Tasks of Religion, that we will Read and Pray ſo much, and ſo often every Day, and obſerve voluntary Faſts, and abſtain from ſuch innocent Diverſions, *&c.* which Men commonly reſolve in ſome great Heats and Fits of Devotion, which they fancy will continue in the ſame fervour, but never do; and then theſe Tasks grow very uneaſie, as every thing of Religion does, when it grows a Task; and then they degenerate into dulneſs and formality, and then Men either leave them off, and with that are tempted to leave off Religion itſelf; or they are ſo very cold, that they fancy themſelves ſpiritually dead, and fall into Melancholly, into Deſertions, into Deſpair itſelf.

It

It is a dangerous thing for Men by raſh and arbitrary Vows, to tye themſelves up from doing that, which otherwiſe they might very innocently do, and which they will be ſtrongly tempted to do, when they have vowed not to do it. The Guides of Souls know, that this is no imaginary Caſe, but what they ſo often meet with, and ſee ſuch ill effects of, that it is very fit to warn Men of the ſnare. Were there no other reaſon againſt the Monkiſh Vows of Celibacy, Poverty, and Obedience, I ſhould think this ſufficient, that conſidered only as perpetual Vows, they are a dangerous State of Temptation; and for my own part, I would never adviſe any Man to make a perpetual Vow to do, or not to do any thing, which it is not perpetually his Duty to do, or not to do.

Thus to marry with Perſons of a diſagreeable Age, or a diſagreeable Humour, or a contrary Religion, is to put our ſelves into a ſtate of Temptation; but ſuch particular Inſtances would be endleſs, and therefore I forbear

If God lead us into Temptation, he will give us ſufficient ſtrength to reſiſt, if we improve his Grace; if we lead our ſelves into Temptation, and God leave us to the power and ſub-

tilty of the Tempter, the ſin and the folly is our own.

5*thly*, I obſerve by what means our Saviour conquered the Devil's Temptations, and that was by the Authority, and by the Word of God: *It is written, Man ſhall not live by bread alone. It is written, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God. It is written, Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* Theſe are ſuch Anſwers, as would admit of no Reply; for the Authority of God can never be anſwered.

And thus we muſt conquer alſo, if ever we will conquer, by a firm Faith in God, and Belief of his Word: Faith is our Shield, and the Word of God is the Sword of the Spirit, and we have no other ſure Defence againſt all Temptations.

This ruined our firſt Parents in Paradiſe, when their Reaſon and Natural Powers, were in their greateſt Vigour, Perfection, and Integrity, that inſtead of inſiſting on God's Authority, they ventured to reaſon the Caſe with the Tempter. Set aſide the Authority of God, and the Devil will quickly out-wit, and out-reaſon us; he is skilled in all the Arts of Deceit, and Me-

Methods of Perſwaſions, and without God's Authority, our Courage, our Reſolution, our Honour, out Reaſon itſelf, even all the Rants and triumphant Speculations of Philoſophy, will fail us in the Day of Trial: to Tempt, is either to deceive, or to perſwade, and there is no other ſecure defence againſt either, but the Authority, and the Word of God. The wiſeſt Reaſoner may be impoſed on by ſo artificial a Tempter; but God can neither deceive, nor be deceived, and then while we believe God, and have regard to his Commands, we cannot be deceived neither: And what is able to reſiſt all the Terrours and Flatteries of the World, and the Fleſh, but the Authority of that God, who is our Maker, and our Judge? What inſignificant Names are Vertue and Vice, how weak and feeble is the ſence of Decency and Honour, and the Dignity of Human Nature, and of a Life of Reaſon (after we have read or writ ſo many Volumes about it) when we feel the ſoft Charms of Pleaſure, and our Eyes are filled with viſible Glories? Who would not part with a fine Thought or two, with ſome pretty Notions of Moral Beauty, and Intellectual Pleaſures, for a Happineſs which may be ſeen and felt? But the Authority of *GOD*, the firm

firm belief of his Promiſes and Threatnings, the hopes and fears of another World, are beyond all other Perſwaſions, unleſs any thing can perſwade a Man to be eternally miſerable.

This may ſuffice to be ſpoke in General, concerning our Saviours Temptation; we come now to conſider,

II. The particular Temptation, wherewith our Saviour was Aſſaulted, and they are Three.

1. The Firſt was to relieve his Hunger, after his long faſting by working a Miracle: *And when the Tempter came to him, he ſaid, if thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread.*

This was a very artificial Temptation, which it may be, none but Chriſt himſelf would have been aware of: For what hurt was it, for the Son of God to work a Miracle? What hurt was it for a Man, who was Hungry to relieve his Hunger? For here was no Temptation to exceſs, but to ſatisfie the neceſſities of Nature: What hurt was it for him, who afterwards fed ſo many Thouſands by Miracles, in this great Diſtreſs, to have wrought a Miracle to ſatisfie his own Hunger? This was very Plauſible, and looked like very charitable Advice, but yet there was a ſecret Snare in it.

1*ſt*, For this was made a Trial, whether he were

were the Son of God or not, *If thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread:* Now had he complied with this, it had argued a diſtruſt of his Relation to God, and of the Love of his Father; and this was a Temptation to Sin. Thus the Tempter dealt with our firſt Parents, made them jealous of God's good Intentions towards them, and by that Tempted them to Diſobedience. *The Serpent ſaid unto the Woman, ye ſhall not ſurely die. For God knoweth, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing good and evil.* That is, God envies your Happineſs, and therefore has forbid you to Eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Thus the Devil ſuggeſted to our Saviour, that he had great reaſon to Queſtion, whether he were the Son of God, becauſe he was deſtitute of all the Comforts and Supports of Life, and after forty Days Faſting, had nothing in the Wilderneſs to Eat, unleſs he would turn Stones into Bread.

And though this part of the Temptation our Saviour takes no notice of in his Anſwer, but ſcorns it; yet we find it makes a very powerful Impreſſion upon other Men, who are apt to meaſure God's Love or Hatred by preſent

preſent things; when they are Proſperous, they conclude they are the Favorites of Heaven; when they are Afflicted and meet with croſs Events, then God is angry with them and has forſaken them: And though this argues ſuch a ſtupid Ignorance of Chriſtianity, that one would think, it could be no Temptation to a Chriſtian, yet it is too Notorious, that three parts of the Melancholy, the Deſertions, nay deſpair of many Chriſtians, is owing to no other Cauſe: they think their Condition ſafe for the next World, while they are Proſperous in this, but as ſoon as the World begins to Frown they are irrecoverably Damned; but would ſuch men conſider, that our Saviour himſelf wanted Bread in the Wilderneſs, and had no place, whereon to lay his Head; it would cure theſe Deſertions if there be no greater Guilt, which a ſtrait Fortune awakens the ſenſe of, which I doubt is too often the Caſe.

2*dly*, There was another Snare in this, to perſwade our Saviour, to ſupply the neceſſities of Nature by extraordinary means, without the immediate Direction and Command of God; for this had been a diſtruſt of God's Care and Providence, to have relieved his own wants by preternatural and uncommanded Methods:

thods: And therefore to this he Anſwers, *It is written, man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* That is, Bread indeed is the ordinary Proviſion God has made for the ſupport of Mans Life, but when theſe ordinary and natural Proviſions fail, he has other ways to ſupport Life, as he fed the *Iſraelites* with Manna and Quails in the Wilderneſs, and gave them Drink out of a Rock, but then we muſt patiently and ſecurely expect by what means God will provide for us, and till the *word proceed out of his mouth*, till we have ſome particular Command and Direction for it, we muſt take no Extraordinary, Uncommanded, much leſs Forbidden ways, to preſerve our Lives: for this is want of truſt in God, or want of Submiſſion to his Will. Extream want and neceſſity is almoſt an irreſiſtible Temptation to human Nature, to diſtruſt the ordinary Proviſions of Providence, and to provide for our ſelves by what means we can; and to juſtifie what we do by ſuch neceſſities: it requires a great degree of Faith and Truſt in God, when we have no Proſpect of ordinary Succors, patiently to expect God's Proviſion, without going out of Gods way: But thus our Saviour was

tempted, and has taught us how to conquer this Temptation, *Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God:* If Bread fail, we muſt expect by what other means God will ſupply our Wants, and not tranſgreſs thoſe Laws God hath preſcribed us, how deſperate ſoever our Condition ſeem to be.

2dly, The next Temptation is in the other extreme, to preſume ſo far upon his Intereſt in God's Favour and Protection, as to make dangerous and vain-glorious Experiments of God's care: *He ſet him upon a pinacle of the temple, and ſaid unto him, If thou be the Son of God, caſt thy ſelf down: for it is written, He ſhall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up, leſt at any time, thou ſhouldſt daſh thy foot againſt the ſtone.*

When the Tempter perceived, that Chriſt wholly relied on the Directions and Authority of Scripture, he inforces his Temptation with Scripture too, miſunderſtood and miſapplied. And theſe are the moſt dangerous Temptations of all, which impoſe upon Men with a ſhew of Religion, as our late Experience of a wild Enthuſiaſtic Age will tell us; when nothing ſo bad

bad could be thought of, but ſome Men had Scripture-Examples, or Precepts, or Propheſies, or Parables, to juſtifie it; and therefore we muſt be aware of this, as well as of all the other Arts and Stratagems of the Tempter.

In anſwer to this our Saviour proves, that this Text could not mean, that God would command his Angels to bear him up in their hands, if he ſhould fling himſelf from the Pinacle of the Temple, becauſe we are expreſly forbid, to make ſuch Experiments of God's Protection, as this: *It is written, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

To tempt is to try, and to tempt God is to try what he will, or can do for us, beyond his Promiſe, and beyond the ordinary Methods of his Providence; eſpecially when we either murmur againſt God, for not anſwering our unreaſonable demands, or preſume upon his favour to do that, which he has forbid us to do, or expect his Protection and Bleſſing, when we put our ſelves out of the ordinary Protection of his Providence: it were eaſie, had I time to give inſtances, of all theſe ways of tempting God; the Temptation of our Saviour concerns the laſt I mentioned, out of a vain-glorious humor,

mour, and a preſumption of God's peculiar favour to us, voluntarily without any reaſonable pretence, much leſs neceſſity, to thruſt ourſelves into apparent and unavoidable Dangers, and expect God ſhould ſave us by Miracles: for this is what our Saviour was tempted to, to fling himſelf down from the Pinacle of the Temple, in a preſumptuous confidence of God's care of him, that he would command his Angels to bear him up in their hands.

This looks like Faith in *God*, a plerephory of Hope, and full aſſurance of his Love, but indeed is Vanity, Pride, Inſolence, Preſumption, and a tempting of *God*. It is ſuch an Affront and Indignity, as wiſe Men will not bear from their beſt Friends, when they impoſe upon them, not to do them a real kindneſs, but to gratifie their vanity and humour in ſuch Demands, as a wiſe Man cannot honourably grant.

And yet there is a more dangerous and fatal Preſumption then this, when men have ſuch a ſtrong Imagination of their being the Sons, the Choſen and Elect People of God, that they think they cannot do any thing to forfeit God's Love: they may make more bold with *God*'s Laws

Laws then other Men, for *God ſees no ſin in his people*; nay indeed, that it is no Sin to advance themſelves, and the Cauſe they have Eſpouſed, which they call the Glory of God, by extraordinary means, that is, by tranſgreſſing all the known and ordinary Rules of Juſtice and Charity.

Theſe are dangerous Temptations, and we have ſeen the miſerable Effects of them, and therefore let no man think, that he is ſo great a favorite of Heaven, as to have God at his beck to ſave him by Miracles, when he wilfully expoſes himſelf to ſuch Dangers, as nothing but Miracles can Deliver him from; much leſs to think, that God will alter the nature of Good and Evil for his ſake; that he will diſpenſe with his Laws, (Laws which are as Eternal and Unchangeable as his own Nature) when ever ſuch vain Enthuſiaſts pretend to ſerve themſelves, and his Glory by the breach of them, *It is written, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

3. Theſe two Temptations were managed with great Art to deceive, the third is open and bare-faced. The Devil in expreſs words tempts him to Idolatry, with the Promiſe of all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them

them; which he had drawn a beautiful Landskip of, and ſhew'd him from a high Mountain: *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me:* Or as St. *Luke* relates it: *All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for it is delivered unto me, and to whomſoever I will, I give it.* Which in ſome ſenſe was true at that time; not that the Devil had the Supreme and Abſolute diſpoſal of Kingdoms, for St. *Paul* aſſures us, that all the Powers even of the Pagan World, 13 Rom. 1. were *of God and ordained by God.* But yet he was at that time the God of this World, and had a more viſible Kingdom than God himſelf. The true Worſhippers of God were at that time chiefly confined to *Judea*, a very little ſpot of Earth, but all the Power and Glory of the World was in the hands of Idolaters, who Worſhipped the Devil and wicked Spirits: And the force of the Argument is, as if he had ſaid to our Saviour, You call your ſelf the Son of God, and Worſhip him, but will God do that for you, which I can and will do, if you Worſhip me: You your ſelf ſee, that he has no Kingdom but *Judea* to beſtow on you, and that alſo is at preſent in the Hands of my Worſhippers; but what is that to all the Kingdoms

doms of the World, which are at my diſpoſal, and which you ſee your ſelf are mine and under my Government. But our Saviour without diſputing the value of this World, or what Power the Devil had in the diſpoſal of it, chides away the Tempter with Indignation, be gone Satan, *For it is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* But tho' Chriſt refuſed this proffer, his pretended Vicar has taken it, and revived the old Pagan Idolatry for the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them.

This is the prevailing Temptation to this day, to corrupt Religion, the Faith and Worſhip of God for ſome temporal Advantages: too many Men think that the beſt Religion, which will beſt ſerve a ſecular Intereſt; And we have reaſon to think, that too many do this, and know what they do; that their furious Zeal for a falſe Religion is not all Ignorance and Miſtake, but an undiſſembled Love of this World: For can we think, that the Devil never tempted any Man but Chriſt, knowingly and willingly to renounce the true Religion, and the true Worſhip of God for this World? No doubt he does, and very often prevails too; and theſe knowing Idolaters who make a downright

right bargain to Worſhip the Devil for the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them, are thoſe who abuſe the Ignorant and Credulous with a falſe and hypocritical Zeal.

But let us remember, that we muſt *Worſhip the Lord our God, and him only muſt we ſerve*: Let us remember what our Saviour tells us, *What ſhall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and loſe his own ſoul? Or, What ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* Let us remember, that the end of Religion is to pleaſe God, to Glorifie him, to be like him, and to enjoy him for ever, and this will give us a ſecure Victory over the World and the Devil, *Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for ever, Amen.*

FINIS.